

simply a delight to read the work of this star-studded cast of international shorebird biologists and ecologists.

This book is a feast for the eyes, with 240 wonderful colour photographs from throughout the Flyway (they are to be found on every page). These images are as good as photographs get, and they are reproduced and laid-out superbly. Page numbers are frequently (and rightly) omitted to leave the images unspoilt, and many images cover the entire page. The reader is treated not only to the customary spectacular close ups of individual birds (e.g. the Bar-tailed Godwit

on page 13), but also to behavioural sequences (e.g. the fight of two Whimbrel on page 122), and landscapes (e.g. the Great Knot standing vigil over the tundra valley in eastern Siberia on page 70). This is the most impressive collection of published shorebird images of which I am aware.

A few minor criticisms are possible for any book, and here they barely warrant mention. I would have liked to see a clearer distinction, for the lay reader, between migrants and residents (the latter also depend heavily on sites used by migrants) and the caption on page 92 is not strictly accurate with respect to Point Cook. However, these issues are trivial.

I cannot overstate my enthusiasm for this book, and it is not just because I am a shore-birder! This book is about birds, but also about people and places, and the precious things we are set to lose if we don't become more sympathetic to the needs of the wildlife with which we share the planet. The contributors are to be congratulated, not only on the quality of their work, but also on taking the initiative to take their science to a broad audience. I highly recommend this wonderful book.

**Michael Weston**

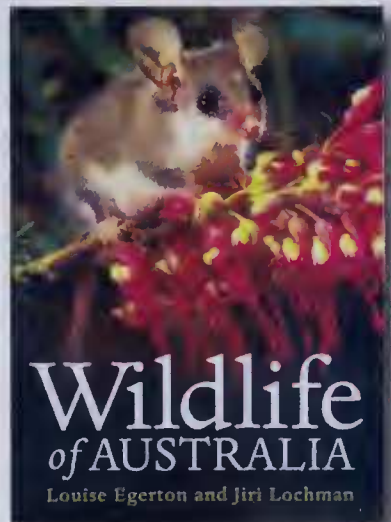
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## Wildlife of Australia

by Louise Egerton and Jiri Lochman

Publisher: Jacana Books, 2009, 448 pages,  
hardback, colour photographs.  
ISBN 9781741149975. RRP \$59.99

What can I say about this book? *Wildlife of Australia* contains a wealth of information on Australian biodiversity, with separate sections devoted to mammals, birds, freshwater fishes, reptiles, frogs and invertebrate species. Selected species appear in family groupings and the habits, habitat, breeding and feeding of each are discussed.



There are many interesting facts to be learned from this book, and extra little tidbits are presented in boxes separate from the rest of the text.

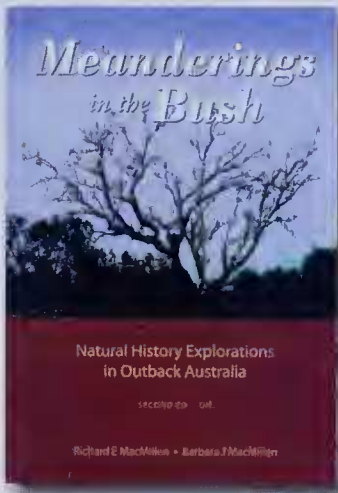
While the description of each species contains much factual, informative and interesting detail, I found the attempts at humour and the anthropomorphic writing style, used by the author particularly for the mammals, but also employed throughout the book, to be extremely irritating.

I did learn information of which I was not previously aware, but still had difficulty deciding to

whom the book was directed. Was it for children? Or perhaps it was written for the overseas market, as every measurement was in metric with imperial measurements in brackets.

The photographs were grand as one would expect from the hands of Jiri Lochman and the other contributors, with super photos appearing in all sections of the book.

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## Meanderings in the Bush: Natural History Explorations in Outback Australia

by Richard E MacMillen and  
Barbara J MacMillen

Publisher: CSIRO Publishing, Collingwood, 2009. 2nd edn, paperback, 208 pages. ISBN 9780643097063. RRP \$49.95.

try. The stories of many adventures and some misadventures are told in a humorous style, all the while showing respect for the country, the station people and outback characters and the fauna encountered and studied.

In Chapter 7, MacMillen discusses the adaptations to the arid environment adopted by some of the wildlife. Chapter 8 introduces the human dimension into the equation and questions whether the native creatures can survive under the changes brought about by the human occupation and use of the outback areas. MacMillen suggests solutions for co-existence; recent history would suggest that it is unlikely that governments will listen.

As an ecologist and as a traveller to many of the places mentioned, I enjoyed reading this book. Now I am looking forward to going back again to see it with fresh eyes.

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This book is a record of American ecologist Richard MacMillen's six visits to Australia over a period of 26 years. As well as descriptions of field work conducted, mostly in Queensland's Channel Country, there are stories of other meanderings in the outback and of living on an island in the Hawkesbury River.

MacMillen's field work was wide-ranging and included: small mammals such as Kowari, Kultarr and Fawn-hopping Mice; Inland Crabs and their burrowing strategies to survive the dry times; and parrots such as Red-rumped, Ring-neck and Little Corellas with their economical use of water.

In addition to field work, there were meanderings, travels and explorations around the coun-